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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBAI 004108

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 7/3/2016  
TAGS: [IR](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#)  
SUBJECT: IRAN SEES SPIES EVERYWHERE, INCLUDING IN JAHANBEGLOO

REF: DUBAI 3263

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CLASSIFIED BY: Jason L Davis, Consul General, Dubai, UAE.  
REASON: 1.4 (d)

1.(S/NF) Summary: Intelligence Minister Mohseni Ejei accuses detained Iranian intellectual Ramin Jahanbegloo of helping US to try to start a "velvet revolution" in Iran, but says the case is not yet complete. A friend of Jahanbegloo says other well-placed contacts cite similar charges against Jahanbegloo and that the supreme leader says he will be charged with espionage. This contact recommends indirect but persistent pressure from the US on Iran to free him. Mohseni Ejei accuses the US of trying to topple the Islamic government and training Iranians as spies. However, he claims Iranian counterintelligence abilities allow Iran to know US decisions made "behind closed doors." End summary.

Jahanbegloo Accused of Plotting a Velvet Revolution with US  
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2.(U) In his first press conference since taking office, Iranian Intelligence Minister Gholam-Hossein Mohseni Ejei said July 2 that Iranian-Canadian professor Ramin Jahanbegloo was arrested on suspicion of working with the US to start a "velvet revolution" in Iran. He clarified, however, that the Intelligence Ministry had not finished its investigation of Jahanbegloo's case.

3.(S/NF) Mohseni Ejei's comments support what a reliable contact told Acting Consul General the day before. This contact claims to be a close friend of Jahanbegloo and says he is actively working for his release. He and other friends have heard from former Majles Speaker Karroubi, one of Expediency Council Chair Rafsanjani's sons, and others that the Intelligence Ministry's cultural office initiated Jahanbegloo's arrest and that a "double agent" claimed Jahanbegloo was promoting an "orange revolution." (This contact did not mention any link to the US.) His sources have heard that Jahanbegloo, detained in early May, was being held on a four-month warrant. Presumably he could be released then, but the contact also heard that the supreme leader told former Iranian Ambassador to France Sadeq Kharrazi that Jahanbegloo would be charged with espionage. On the other hand, the contact takes some hope from indications, such as Supreme Council for National Security Deputy Secretary Ali Monfared's message to Jahanbegloo's wife to call him any time, that not all in the government were convinced of his friend's guilt.

4.(S/NF) This contact thought the government had deliberately chosen Jahanbegloo, who is not a hardcore political activist but rather a secular-minded intellectual, in order to intimidate the 'thinking class' as well as the 'activist class.' This contact also believes the Iranian government is using Jahanbegloo's detention to test the West to see how much an issue it makes of the case during this time of intense focus on the nuclear issue.

That said, the contact's advice to the USG, echoing other contacts reported in reftel, was not to make it a US issue with Iran, but to push Iran indirectly. He suggested going to others, such as the UN and the EU, and asking them to raise the issue in their direct contacts with Iran.

5.(S/NF) This contact said he and other friends of Jahanbegloo are trying to frame Jahanbegloo's case as an international issue, encouraging notables from around the world to sign petitions. They also have been trying to get the Arabic press to focus on Jahanbegloo's case because the Iranian government cares more about what the Arabic street thought of it than the Western street, but to date they have had no success. He asked that the US do anything it can to get the Arabic press to pick up the issue.

6.(S/NF) This source, who claims to be in close contact with Jahanbegloo's wife, said he does not think Jahanbegloo has been tortured. However, his interrogator (nfi) is skillfully manipulating his wife by being her only point of contact, calling her, sometimes allowing, sometimes withholding contact between her and her husband, etc. This interrogator asked her to tell the BBC that her husband is fine, but she refused.

Mohseni Ejei: US Trying to Topple Regime  
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7.(U) According to Mehrnews.com, Mohseni Ejei in his press conference also accused the US of trying to topple the Islamic Republic by training elements inside and outside the country. The enemy is trying to show that the government is inefficient. Furthermore, "they are making numerous efforts to foment

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insecurity and tension in Iran" and have allocated more than the \$75 million officially announced to be used to "train spies."

8.(U) Mohseni Ejei praised Iran's counterintelligence capabilities. The intelligence ministry "keeps track of and is ready to deal with all internal and external measures" against the government. "We are currently in a good position in terms of conducting technical intelligence activities and are even aware of some decisions that the enemy makes behind closed doors."

9.(U) Regarding recent ethnic unrest in Khuzestan, Sistan-va Baluchestan, East Azarbaijan and West Azarbaijan, he said ethnic groups are not threats but opportunities for the Islamic system.

However, the US is trying to use both ethnic groups and non-governmental organizations in Iran to fight against the country. In the case of Azarbaijan, the people did not "allow the enemy to exploit the situation." Regarding NGOs, "They (the US) take various NGO members abroad to educate them. Recently some people have been officially invited to be trained in the US under the pretext of attending scientific seminars or for business or employment. The initial financial assistance given to them is not enough to arouse suspicion that they have been invited to be trained as spies."

10.(S/NF) Comment: The contact quoted above is reportedly a close friend of Jahanbegloo, and this friendship clearly colors the advice he is giving the US. He is afraid that his friend will pay the price if the US publicly pounds Iran on Jahanbegloo's case. At the same time, he does not want the US to forget about his friend's situation in the pursuit of a nuclear solution. His advice of quiet, consistent pressure is likely the best in the current situation.

11.(S/NF) Comment continued: Mohseni-Ejei's general comments

about the threat of spies everywhere indicates a general paranoia that should be used to demonstrate the government's disconnect with its population. In our public rhetoric, we should ask why the Iranian government does not trust its people and why it wants to withhold from them the education that can come from interacting with outside organizations on all types of issues, including civil society.

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